



GOVERNOR LINDA LINGLE'S 2003 PREVIEW

*By Linda Lingle, Governor
State of Hawaii*

Aloha, I always enjoyed writing articles for the Construction Preview as Mayor of Maui County, and I am very pleased have the opportunity to write to you again as Governor. I believe that last November's historic election will truly mark "A New Beginning" for the construction industry in Hawaii, and I would like to tell you why.

During my campaign for Governor, I met with many representatives from the construction industry and listened to their concerns. They expressed their displeasure with an overly bureaucratic and confusing zoning process, a slow and unresponsive permitting and inspection system, and many laws that discouraged new construction. They also spoke about unfair practices in the awarding of government construction contracts. Most often, they asked me, "Isn't there a better way?"

Of course there is a better way. My administration is already hard at work on implementing policies that will make it easier for the construction industry to do business in Hawaii.

You know that time is money. Government must recognize this fact and treat your time as valuable in everything we do.

We will work with the counties to streamline the permitting process to cut unnecessary regulations and consolidate the permit system into a real, "one-stop shop." The process

of permitting is intended to help us protect our environment and support reasonable, sustainable growth. We need a system that helps us make informed decisions, not just mindless paper shuffling.

We will work closely with federal, state and county agencies to eliminate pointless duplication and the wasting of resources on multiple reviews of programs and projects. The goal should be intelligent regulation, not bureaucratic obstructionism.

A healthy construction industry reflects a healthy economy, and creates jobs for our people. I will support our construction business, and together we will build a brighter future for Hawaii.

We must restore fairness to our system of awarding government contracts. This is not just about restoring competitiveness to public construction; it is part of my pledge to restore trust and integrity to government. We will work to do away with the system of awarding government contracts based on "who you know" and replace it with a system drawing on the current best practices used by the federal government and other states.

Many external factors bode well for the construction industry in

Hawaii. Record low interest rates, population growth and a tight housing market should combine to increase the demand for new home construction. The fact that our nation has re-dedicated itself to a strong defense system means our many military installations will require updated facilities and new housing for personnel. And of course, population growth will require new spending on our transportation infrastructure, and I will work with our congressional delegation and the Bush Administration to secure for Hawaii our fair share of federal highway funding.

During my campaign, I was fortunate to receive support from the Building Industry Association's political action committee, Build-PAC. The association has nearly 500 member companies who represent over 20,000 employees statewide in construction. It was the first time in eight years that Build-PAC endorsed a candidate, and the endorsement was a vote of confidence from the community on my commitment to improve the local business environment and economy.

A healthy construction industry reflects a healthy economy, and creates jobs for our people. I will support our construction business, and together we will build a brighter future for Hawaii.

I look forward to writing you again next year and reporting our progress.

Mahalo for your support.